

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Introduction:

Claims 102-105, 107, 108, 129, and 134 are amended, and claims 136 and 137 are new. Claims 85 and 102-137 are now pending in the application. (Claims 1-84 and 86-101 were previously canceled.) Applicants respectfully request reexamination and reconsideration of the application.

Claims 102, 107-110, 114-116, 121-123, and 125-134 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by US Patent No. 5,308,252 to Mroczkowski et al. ("Mroczkowski"). In addition, claims 85, 104-106, 111-113, 117-119, and 124 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as obvious in view of Mroczkowski. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 102-128, 136, and 137:

Turning first to independent claim 102, that claim recites a "first support coupled directly to a second side of the first leaf portion opposite the first side of the first leaf portion." Claim 102 further recites that a first side of a second leaf portion is "coupled directly to the . . . first support, wherein the . . . first support joins the first leaf portion directly to the second leaf portion." Claim 102 also recites a "second support coupled directly to . . . [a] second side of the second leaf portion" that is opposite the first side of the second leaf portion.

In rejecting claim 102, the PTO equated the upper portion of Mroczkowski's support arm 317 with the first support of claim 102 and the lower portion of Mroczkowski's support arm 317 with the second support of claim 102. The PTO also equated Mroczkowski's spring portion 307 with the first leaf portion of claim 102 and Mroczkowski's spring portion 308 with the second leaf portion of claim 102. As should be apparent, however, Mroczkowski's contact element 300 is not—and indeed cannot be—configured such that it meets the recitations of claim 102. For example, the upper portion of Mroczkowski's support arm 317 is not directly coupled to the spring portion 308. As another example, the upper portion of support arm 317 is not attached to an opposite side of the spring portion 308 from which the lower portion of support arm 317 is attached. For at least the foregoing reasons, Mroczkowski does not anticipate claim 102.

Moreover, not only is there no suggestion or motivation to modify Mroczkowski, Mroczkowski's contact element 300 could not be modified such that the upper portion of Mroczkowski's support arm 317 is directly coupled to the spring portion 308, nor could

Mroczkowski's contact element 300 be modified such that the upper portion of support arm 317 is attached to an opposite side of the spring portion 308 from which the lower portion of support arm 317 is attached. Indeed, to do so would render Mroczkowski's contact element 300 unuseable for its intended purpose. For at least the foregoing reasons, Mroczkowski does not render claim 102 obvious.

Claims 85, 103-106, and 136 depend from claim 102 and, at least because of that dependency, are also patentable over Mroczkowski.

Independent claims 107 and 108 are patentable over Mroczkowski generally form some of the same reasons that claim 102 is patentable over Mroczkowski. Claims 109-126 and 137 depend from claim 107 or claim 108 and, at least because of that dependency, are also patentable over Mroczkowski.

Claims 129-135:

Independent claim 129 recites "a beam structure comprising a continuous closed perimeter portion enclosing a hollow space disposed within said perimeter portion." It should be readily be apparent from a review of the drawings in Mroczkowski that Mroczkowski does not teach or suggest such a beam structure. Indeed, no beam structure disclosed in Mroczkowski includes "a continuous closed perimeter portion enclosing a hollow space disposed within said perimeter portion." For at least this reason, claim 129 is patentable over Mroczkowski.

Claims 130-135 depend from claim 129 and, at least because of that dependency, are also patentable over Mroczkowski.

Conclusion:

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all of the claims are allowable and the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a discussion with Applicants' attorney would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (801) 323-5934.

Respectfully submitted,

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